ISSUE 07

AGRIVIEW

SEPTEMBER 2007

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Minister's Message

I recently took part in the annual Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in Whistler, British Columbia along with other Provincial, Federal and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture. The meeting's main goal was to establish the basis for a new Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), to take effect in 2008. The result from this meeting is an initiative called Growing Forward.

Evolving from the current APF, Growing Forward will guide governments with a common vision – a vision of a profitable and innovative industry that seizes opportunities in responding to market demands and contributes to the health and well-being of Canadians.

The initiative has built on the ideas put forward by producers and other stakeholders through extensive country-wide consultations. Overall, it means building on past strengths, and developing the programs and services necessary to serve all members of the agricultural community.

From a production standpoint, there are now four new business risk management programs available that are more responsive, predictable and bankable. They include:

AgriInvest, replacing the coverage currently provided under the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program;

AgriStability, a margin-based program that provides income support when a producer experiences income losses of greater than 15 per cent;

AgriInsurance, includes existing crop insurance (now called production insurance) and other products and will expand to include other commodities; and

AgriRecovery, a disaster relief framework to provide rapid assistance when disasters hit producers, filling gaps not covered by existing government programming.

Overall, Saskatchewan is pleased with the general direction of the new APF, although some concerns still remain, especially with respect to the disaster relief framework.

The federal government has proposed that the disaster relief framework be funded on a 60:40 basis in the case of small disasters. This would continue the application of the unfair formula for national program funding, under which provinces like Saskatchewan – with large agriculture industries and small tax bases – bear a significantly higher per capita cost.

I am willing to work co-operatively with newly appointed Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz on these issues, and other challenges facing Saskatchewan's agriculture industry. I know the Minister believes in full federal funding for disaster assistance, a commitment he made at a candidates forum put on by APAS, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, during the last federal election. Mr. Ritz said "a separate stand alone disaster type program…it's got to be on an ad-hoc basis, we don't know what's coming out there…but 100 per cent funded by the federal government; no more 60:40…we will fund it 100 per cent."

Minister Ritz should understand that if agriculture programs do not work for Saskatchewan, they will not work for Canada.

After all, we represent more than 40 per cent of Canada's agriculture land base.

Our concerns must be addressed when provincial ministers meet with the federal government as scheduled in early September.

Sincerely,

Mark Wartman
Minister, Agriculture and Food

For more information on Growing Forward, visit www.agr.gc.ca/pol/grow-croiss/index_e.php.

FRCC lobby leads to freight savings

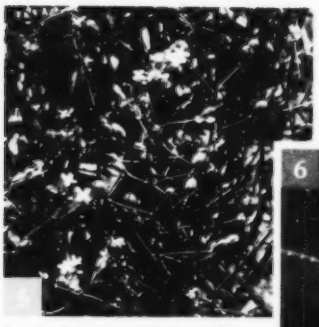
The Farmers' Rail Car Coalition (FRCC) is to be congratulated on the recent success of its lobby to reduce maintenance costs for railway hopper cars, says Agriculture and Food Minister Mark Wartman, vice-chair of the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation.

The lobby was part of the FRCC's effort to purchase the Government of Canada's hopper car fleet. While the FRCC met disappointment in that objective, the FRCC discovered during the development of its business plan that the railways were overcharging farmers for hopper car maintenance and made a case to the federal government for a reduction in grain freight rates under the Grain Freight Rate Revenue Cap.

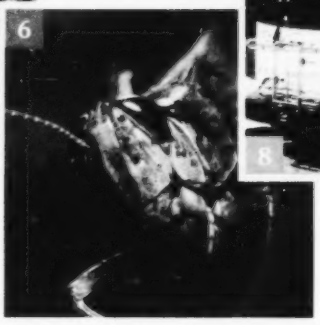
"This reduction in freight rates by $67.5 million or $2.41 per tonne will provide significant benefits to Western Canadian farmers long into the future," Wartman said. "The FRCC's work since 1995 and the Government of Saskatchewan's funding of over $1 million to the FRCC have paid off for Saskatchewan producers. The FRCC deserves credit for bringing the issue of excessive maintenance costs to the public's attention and for leading the effort to have the federal government make immediate changes. I applaud the FRCC and all its member organizations."

The FRCC and its 17 member organizations represent over 90 per cent of the farmers in Western Canada.

STORY SNAPSHOTS



Camelina is a promising new crop for Saskatchewan



Newly discovered soil microbe may control grasshoppers and other insects

Bio-bus update: optimum biodiesel blends

Conference to focus on Saskatchewan fibre

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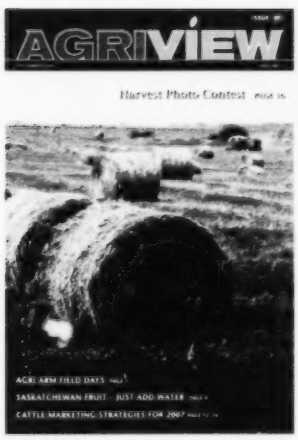

Baling season

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

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Assessing Alfalfa Stands

Root examinations: In the fall or early spring, dig out the crown of a few alfalfa plants in a few areas of the field. Take a knife and cut the root and crown lengthwise to look for root rot and discolouration.

By Andre Bonneau
Forage Conversion Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

After a few years, production in an alfalfa stand can begin to drop. At times like this, the hot weather is usually blamed when production suffers, but what about when the weather is good yet the stand is still weak?

Can production declines be predicted in time to do something about them?

Yes, they can.

Each spring, forage producers should take a shovel and a square into their alfalfa stands. They need these tools to assess the number of plants, the number of stems and the root health of the stand.

Number of plants: The number of plants in a square foot or square metre has an effect on the yield. As the plant population decreases, yield may also decrease and weeds can invade. Low plant populations can also decrease the quality of the alfalfa, due to coarser plants.

Stems per square foot: Potential yield in alfalfa is determined by counting the number of stems over two inches long in a square foot (900 cm^2). Do this in a few spots in the field, and take an average. Multiply this number by 1/10 and add 0.38 to give an idea of potential alfalfa yield. Remember that potential yield indicates the health of the stand; the actual yield may be different.

Root examinations: In the fall or early spring, dig out the crown of a few alfalfa plants in a few areas of the field. Get the entire crown and at least six inches (15 cm) of tap root. The root and crown should be symmetrical, and there should be many shoots emerging from the top and side of the crown. Take a knife and cut the root and crown lengthwise to look for root rot and discolouration. The more discoloured and rotten the root is, the lower the yield potential of the plant.

Keep an eye on these three items to help predict the potential of the hay stand.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FEED TEST ANALYSIS

By Murray Feist
Ruminant Nutrition Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

Feed testing is an important component of any beef cattle feeding program. Testing feed for its nutrient content will help producers plan a feeding program for the upcoming fall and winter months. Feed testing also provides an opportunity to check for anti-nutritional factors, such as moulds/toxins, nitrates and prussic acid.

The feeding of beef cattle revolves around forage; therefore, any forages to be used in the feeding program should be tested. Forages contain varying amounts of protein, energy and minerals, depending on their stage of growth when harvested, growing environment, harvesting conditions and variety (i.e. legume, grass or straw). As shown in Table 1, alfalfa is different from bromegrass, which is different from barley straw.

Table 1. Average forage feed values

Forage	Crude Protein (per cent dry matter)	Total Digestible Nutrients (per cent dry matter)
Alfalfa hay, early	18	59
Alfalfa hay, late	16	53
Bromegrass hay	10	55
Barley straw	3	46

Source: Bodycote Testing Group, Adapted from NRC Nutrient Requirements for Dairy Cattle, 1993

Other feedstock, such as byproducts or grain screenings, should also be tested as they tend to vary in nutrition. Cereal and pulse grains may also be tested, although it isn't considered as high a priority for beef cattle as testing of forages and byproducts.

It is important to take a representative sample from the feed for testing and nutrient analysis. Table 2 indicates how many sub-samples need to be taken.

Table 2. Sampling Procedures

Sample	Procedure
Grains	1. 3 samples/truck load 2. 10-12 probes per bin
Silage	1. Probed 15-20 locations in silo/pit 2. Grab Sample: 5-6/feeding for 3 feedings
Hay/Forages	1. 15-20 locations in stack 2. Greater than 20 bales: sample 10 per cent of number of bales 3. Less than 20 bales: sample all bales

Feed analysis will provide nutrient values that will allow the producer to effectively balance rations that will meet a cow's daily requirements. Using average values often results in average results. In this case, knowledge is power, and can be effective in providing smart feeding choices and eliminating unwanted costs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

CAMELINA: A PROMISING NEW CROP FOR SASKATCHEWAN

By Patrick Mooleki
Crop Development Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

Although crop diversification is not new to Saskatchewan producers, the need for another crop with unique agronomic and quality characteristics, as well as market demand, always generates interest. Recent research and commercial production attempts in Saskatchewan indicate that camelina, an ancient oilseed crop, might possess these features.

Camelina has a unique oil profile that has generated interest among the many end users in the cosmetics and human nutrition industries. In addition to being a good source of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids (promoted by the health food industry as being able to help lower high blood pressure, cholesterol and heart disease), it has the potential for use as a feedstock in the biodiesel industry. The by-product (meal) is also suitable as feed for poultry, cattle and fish.

Camelina is a member of the Brassicaceae family. It is a short-seasoned (85–100 days) crop with good drought tolerance characteristics, making it a viable oilseed crop for the drier south-western part of the province. Camelina can grow on a wide range of soil types, and is responsive to fertilizer applications comparable to canola. However, it can yield well with lower nutrient inputs. Although camelina seedlings are small, the crop competes favourably with weeds, especially when seeded early. Due to its cold tolerance, it can be seeded as soon as the soil is workable, giving it an advantage over spring germinating weeds. Other positive traits include resistance to blackleg and flea beetles and lower susceptibility to shattering. Camelina requires no special equipment for seeding and harvesting, although, due to the small sized-seed (1/4 to 1/3 that of canola), adjustments are needed when handling camelina.

Research is currently underway in areas of variety development, stand establishment, nutrient requirements and broadleaf weed control. Camelina has excellent potential from an agronomic viewpoint. However, commercial production is limited by the market. Therefore, market development is necessary before producers can grow large acreages of the crop.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Flax straw management: chopping

By the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission

Flax is a favourable addition to many farmers' crop rotations, as more than one in four Saskatchewan producers plant flax each year.

Oilseed flax has a significant percentage of long, tough stem fibres. It is therefore difficult to incorporate the straw into the soil after harvest, as the fibres wrap around and/or plug disks, wheels and shovels. Past practices included burning the flax straw.

To help raise awareness of alternatives to burning, the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission (SFDC) is working with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on an Agri-Environmental Group Plan (AEGP) for straw management. Through this program, the Commission is developing Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) that will both improve air quality and enhance economic opportunities available to its members.

Chopping and spreading flax straw is a viable and much preferred alternative to burning. To determine whether straw is likely to chop easily, select five to 10 stalks of straw and, holding them with both hands, quickly pull them apart. If the stalks snap, your chopper is most likely able to deal with the flax straw. If the stalks resist breaking, you may want to find another use for the straw.

Straw choppers on the largest, newer combines have been used effectively to chop and spread flax straw. It can then be incorporated into the soil without causing too much difficulty for future crops.

Rotary combines are generally better for chopping flax straw than conventional ones. Sharpening the stationary blades or installing new hammers improves the chopping effectiveness. Select chopper/spreaders that have a wider spread pattern, distributing the straw in a thinner layer over a wider area. This allows the straw to be worked more easily into the soil in the spring. Some producers utilize a forage chopper without the silage wagon to pick up the windrowed straw, and then chop and blow the residue onto the field.

Another tactic to make it easier to chop flax straw is to spray flax with glyphosate before swathing or combining. This causes the flax to dry out and break down to some extent, allowing the knives to cut through the straw more easily.

Flax straw is easier to chop after a hot, dry day. If you've had a hot, dry August, and/or your crop is short, chopping is more likely to work efficiently for you. The more moisture left in the plant, the tougher it will be to break the stalks with the chopper.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission at 306-664-1901; or
- Visit the website at saskflax.saskflax.com; or
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Feed Research Centre Aims To Create Opportunities

The growing bioproducts/biofuels sector in the province is creating new opportunities for the agriculture and agri-food sectors.

The production of biofuels creates large amounts of co-products, much of which can be used as valuable livestock feed. Saskatchewan's initial ethanol production targets will generate approximately 850,000 tonnes of Dried Distillers Grain and Solubles (DDGS) that can be processed into feed. Increased canola crushing capacity and biodiesel production in Saskatchewan will add over one million tonnes to the existing supply of canola meal for animal feed.

This added supply of potentially lower-cost feed resources will benefit livestock producers, since feed comprises nearly 70 per cent of livestock production costs, but will also present a challenge, since, without significant expansion, the current livestock industry is not large enough to consume all the locally produced feed. Feed processors, therefore, will need to look outside the province for markets, and will need to add value to their products to increase competitiveness in the global marketplace.

This is where the Feed Technology Research Facility that will be constructed at the University of Saskatchewan enters the picture. When completed, the facility will provide the university's feed, nutrition, processing and crop breeding specialists with critically needed infrastructure, and will establish the university as a world-class centre for feed research technology.

The federal and Saskatchewan governments, through the Agricultural Policy Framework, have provided $5.0 million towards construction of the $12.6 million facility.

The state-of-the-art facility will draw upon scientists from the University of Saskatchewan's Animal and Poultry Science and Agricultural and Bioresource Engineering departments, as well as from the Crop Development Centre, the Prairie Swine Centre and the University of Alberta. It will attract new researchers and graduate students, and spawn industry training programs. It will include research stations with controlled environment facilities for bench-scale processing research, as well as a main pilot plant. Equipment components will support ingredient handling, processing, mixing, heating and product-forming systems, coupled with extensive process monitoring and data collection systems. The facility will have a capacity to produce 2,000 to 5,000 tonnes per year of experimental diets and toll-processed rations. A small-batch capability will provide for high-cost research diets, and a large-batch capability will provide sufficient scale-up for toll processing and for generating research results transferable to the processing industry.

A new feed processing research facility that permits advanced analysis as well as feed enhancement and alteration will be a tremendous benefit for feed producers. In addition to the domestic demand for feed, increased livestock production in Asia, as well as the rapid growth of the global aquaculture industry, are creating new demands for plant-based livestock feed. This presents a significant new opportunity for Saskatchewan, which is already Canada's largest producer and exporter of commodity feedstock.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Scott Wright, Feeds Innovation Institute, University of Saskatchewan at 306-966-4120.

NEWLY DISCOVERED SOIL MICROBE MAY CONTROL GRASSHOPPERS AND OTHER INSECTS

By Scott Hartley
Provincial Specialist
Insect/Pest Management, SAF
and Dr. Dan Johnson and Susan
Entz, University of Lethbridge

Grasshoppers, like many Prairie pests, come and go in different years and regions. Several species of grasshoppers may appear simultaneously or sequentially, damaging cereal, oilseed and pulse crops, and pastures. Certain other grasshopper species feed on rangeland grass, and, in extreme years, they significantly reduce grazing potential.

The concern now is that, if warming trends continue, these pests may become more of a problem more often. At the same time, pesticide use is being scaled back, where possible, and an increasing number of producers are using non-chemical options, such as selection of farming methods and crop characteristics, to reduce pest damage.

Currently, however, there is nothing available that provides the sort of immediate control that chemicals do.

One candidate that is on the horizon was recently discovered in Alberta soil. For years, researchers have looked for microbes that could kill grasshoppers and locusts. The best candidates were naturally occurring fungi, which appear on the dead insects as white mould (Beauveria) or green mould (Metarhizium). The effective strains were all from overseas, making registration and use difficult or even prohibited, because of safety concerns. During a study at the University of Lethbridge, graduate student Susan Entz developed a new DNA-based method to locate and identify Metarhizium fungal isolates.

When the test was applied to Alberta soil samples, several new home-grown Metarhizium were found. At least two of these have proven effective in killing grasshoppers. One of these indigenous biocontrol agents gives a 100-per-cent kill in a week, when spores of the fungus are applied in vegetable oil. The good news gets better, because these microbes work in warm conditions, unlike most insect-killing fungi. Research on Metarhizium indicates no known harmful effects on vertebrates, such as livestock or wildlife. And, an additional benefit is indicated by initial tests in which this newly discovered insect-disease killed crucifer flea beetles and cabbage seedpod weevils, so it might also help to reduce the amount of pesticide used against these insects.

Testing is underway to determine whether the biocontrol agent would be compatible with bees and other non-pest insects. Funding for this research is provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Pest Management Centre, and by the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund. The project has greatly benefited from co-operation from Pulse Canada (Mark Goodwin) and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Dr. Dan Johnson, Professor of Environmental Science, University of Lethbridge, at dan.johnson@uleth.ca; or
- Susan Entz, M.Sc., Research Associate, University of Lethbridge, at susan.entz@uleth.ca; or
- Dr. Cezarina Kora, Project Co-ordinator, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Pest Management Centre, at korac@agr.gc.ca; or
- Scott Hartley, Provincial Specialist, Insect/Pest Management, SAF, at shartley@agr.gov.sk.ca.

At the South East Research Foundation field day in Redvers on July 20, a Bayer representative talks to attendees about the new Group 27 herbicide called Infinity. The Agri-ARM site and industry are co-operating on a research trial, and passing on information about the new technology to producers.

Agri-ARM Program hosts field days

By Shannon Chant
Crop Development Specialist
SAF

The Saskatchewan Agri-ARM (Agriculture-Applied Research Management) Program connects eight regional applied research and demonstration sites into a province-wide network. Each location has an affiliated producer group that sets the research priorities for that site. The sites are located at Canora, Indian Head, Melfort, Prince Albert, Redvers, Rosthern, Scott, and Swift Current.

The Agri-ARM program provides the forum for government, producers, researchers and industry associations to partner on provincial and regional projects.

The eight Agri-ARM sites focus on increasing value from crops and enhancing production efficiency and environmental stewardship in a region. Core projects include variety trials, pulse inoculant studies, minor use pesticide registration trials, cropping systems research, environmental stewardship projects, field evaluation of inputs and equipment, and manure management projects.

This year, the Agri-ARM program assisted in bringing the Western Canadian Cereal Grains for Ethanol Production project to five of the eight locations. The project is based at the Scott Research Farm, one of the eight Agri-ARM locations, and includes 25 locations across Western Canada. The project is designed to help determine the best wheat varieties for ethanol production. Results from this project will include yield and grain quality analysis (including starch and protein percentage) for a number of cereal crops under a range of growing conditions. A number of other research projects are funded at individual Agri-ARM locations.

Every year, each Agri-ARM location hosts at least one field day to allow producers to see the research trials and/or demonstrations at that site. About 1000 producers, researchers and industry representatives attended the Agri-ARM field days in 2007. At six of the eight locations, the Canadian International Grains Institute biodiesel trailer was present at the field days, and attendees could observe the process of biodiesel production from seed to biodiesel.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food provides funding for each Agri-ARM site. In-kind contributions to the sites are also made by Crop Development Branch staff. In 2007, total funding allotted to the Agri-ARM program by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food was approximately $350,000.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Shannon Chant, Crop Development Specialist, Swift Current, by e-mail at [redacted], or phone 306-778-8291; or
- Contact one of the Agri-ARM sites:
  - Conservation Learning Centre, Prince Albert, 306-953-2796;
  - East Central Research Foundation, Canora, 306-563-5551;
  - Indian Head Agricultural Research Foundation, Indian Head, 306-695-5225;
  - Melfort Research Farm, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Melfort, 306-874-2477;
  - Seager Wheeler Farm, Rosthern, 306-232-5959;
  - South East Research Foundation, Redvers, 306-452-3161;
  - Western Applied Research Corporation, Scott, 306-247-2011;
  - Wheatland Conservation Area, Swift Current, 306-778-7289.

ON-FARM FOOD SAFETY A TOP PRIORITY FOR SASKATCHEWAN RESEARCHER

Food safety and food quality have become major issues for all sectors of the food industry in Canada. It's at the first phase of production – the farm – that Sarah Parker focuses her attention.

Dr. Parker, who was raised and educated in Saskatchewan, was hired two years ago as the Saskatchewan Research Chair in On-Farm and Food Safety under the Strategic Research Program (SRP), an initiative funded and administered by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. Parker's main goal is identifying practical on-farm food safety practices for Saskatchewan producers.

"Making sure food is produced safely is always a top priority," said Parker. "Every day, producers are under pressure to enhance their operations and to communicate their efforts."

Parker's current work focuses on pathogen biology and control points, as well as potential controls for biological and chemical hazards, both on-farm and post-slaughter.

Parker says researchers are available to investigate what producers might want done in the area of on-farm and food safety, and to research what needs to be done to put initiatives into place.

"I think it's important for producers that I research where there is an actual need for updated practices," said Parker. "Hopefully, my research will help them find the most practical approaches to make improvements."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Dr. Sarah Parker, SAF Research Chair, On-Farm and Food Safety, Large Animal Clinical Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, phone 306-966-1994; or e-mail sarah.parker@usask.ca.

Dr. Sarah Parker is the Saskatchewan Research Chair in On-Farm and Food Safety under the Strategic Research Program (SRP), an initiative funded and administered by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

Bio-Bus Update: Optimum Biodiesel Blends

By Skip Munshaw
Crop Development Specialist
SAF

The Saskatoon BioBus Phase III project, sponsored by the Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission, City of Saskatoon, Western Canadian Canola Growers, Milligan Bio-Tech and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, commenced February 1, 2007. This project will examine the potential benefits of using B1 and B5 (one per cent and five per cent biodiesel) blends compared to petro-diesel fuel in both hybrid diesel/electric and conventional buses over a two year period ending in February 2009. The results will indicate the optimum biodiesel blend for our unique prairie climate.

In conjunction with this project, Saskatoon Transit has adopted a B1 blend for the entire fleet. This blend was selected because its improvement in fuel lubricity could translate into overall fuel and maintenance cost savings of 4.3 cents per litre along with 3.4 per cent greenhouse gas reductions, based on previous results. Two of the research buses will use a B5 blend delivered from a separate blending tank, to compare its performance with the B1 blend and seasonally changing petro-diesel.

I am often asked why 100 per cent biodiesel use is not widely promoted. In theory, if the biodiesel passes quality specifications, B100 can be used, but there are two reasons why it is not. First, engine manufacturers have put limitations on how much biodiesel can be blended. These restrictions, which are important for warranty issues, are fading as technology and materials adapt to accommodate biofuels and the availability of approved quality biodiesel increases. For example, Cummins recently announced approval of B20 blends for use in its 2002 and later emissions-compliant engines. Second, the prairie climate exhibits extreme temperatures. Canola biodiesel begins to freeze at -3°C. In the previous BioBus Phase II project, a B5 blend was successfully used in -50°C ambient conditions. Greater biodiesel concentrations may cause fuel gelling and related problems.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Skip Munshaw, SAF, at 306-933-6020; or
- Contact Jeff Balon, Manager, Saskatoon Transit, at 306-975-2630.

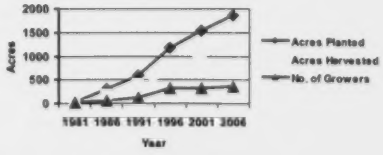
SASKATCHEWAN'S FRUIT INDUSTRY IS GROWING!

By Clarence Peters
Fruit Specialist
SAF

Saskatchewan is poised for continued growth of the fruit production and processing industries. In 1981, Saskatchewan had about 100 acres in berry and tree fruit production, mostly for own use or for farmer's market sales. U-pick strawberry and saskatoon operations were just beginning. Today, it is estimated that we have over 2,300 acres planted to fruit and berry crops. Most of the growth has been in large scale plantings of saskatoons, dwarf cherries, blue honeysuckle and apples. Other fruit crops now include strawberry, raspberry, chokecherry, sea buckthorn, plums and even grapes.

Direct sales through U-picks and farmer's markets are still available and popular, but the fruit industry has moved on to value added products such as jams, jellies, syrups, pie fillings, chocolates and frozen products. The industry has also moved beyond local markets and is developing larger markets, including export markets in Europe and Japan.

The Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association (SFGA) was formed in 1986/87 and has provided leadership and strategic planning for industry development. Recently, several new organizations have been formed to represent individual fruit crops or commodities in conjunction with the SFGA, and in some cases to co-operate with growers in other prairie provinces to develop export markets. Examples are the Canadian Cherry Producers Inc., the Haskap Producers Association, and the Prairie Apple Producers.



Many examples of growth opportunities in the fruit industry can be cited. Demand for saskatoons is increasing rapidly, as processing and overseas markets in Europe develop. Dwarf sour cherry varieties developed at the University of Saskatchewan present many new opportunities for processing (cherry juice, dried cherries, organic cherry products) in addition to fresh markets. Blue honeysuckle is a new berry crop, with improved varieties released by U of S. The Japanese know it as haskap, and are interested in development of this crop in Canada to supply their needs. It is also becoming a favourite fruit locally, especially since it matures by mid-June. Apple varieties developed at the U of S, adapted to our climate, and with very good quality are now available. There is potential to market virus-free strawberry crowns to California or Florida.

These are just a few examples of opportunities that exist in Saskatchewan's fruit industry. Fruit is a high value crop that allows for diversification on our larger scale farms, or for entry into agricultural production on small acreages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Clarence Peters, at 306-787-4666; or
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Saskatchewan Fruit – Just Add Water

At the Outlook Fruit Tour July 31st, participants enjoy sour cherry ice cream, made by Homestead Ice Cream in Saskatoon, just one example of Saskatchewan sour cherries appearing in the marketplace.

By Lana Shaw
Provincial Irrigation Agrologist
SAF

The fruit industry is generating a great deal of buzz this year in Saskatchewan. People are starting and expanding orchards with new varieties of sour cherry, haskap, apples and saskatoons. These new varieties are dividends from many years of fruit crop development at the University of Saskatchewan.

The SAF Irrigation Development Branch is also aiding the industry by providing irrigation development services to orchardists. These services include irrigation certification, soil and water compatibility testing, and irrigation system design. These services have associated fees, but are well worth the cost.

The Outlook Fruit Tour, held July 31st, was organized by SAF Irrigation Agrologist Lana Shaw, in association with the Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation (ICDC). It provided an opportunity for the fruit industry to show off new developments. New and potential growers gained contacts and knowledge from experienced producers and resources in the industry. Since many aspects of the Saskatchewan fruit industry are so new, people in the industry are sharing their experiences and ideas freely in an effort to develop new opportunities. The tour provided a look at the updated orchard at the Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre, which featured new varieties of fruit, including sour cherries and haskap.

An estimated one million pounds of sour cherries will be produced in Saskatchewan by 2009 - 2010.

The newly formed fruit organizations – Canadian Cherry Producers Inc. (www.cherryproducers.ca) and Haskap Canada (www.haskap.ca) – are working to come up with plans for processing the new fruit crops that are soon to arrive on the Saskatchewan scene. It is estimated that one million pounds (or 454,000 kg) of sour cherries will be produced by 2009 or 2010, with a doubling of produce the following year. Most of the new fruit acres will be making use of fruit harvesters rather than relying on u-pick. They will need primary regional processing facilities for cooling, pitting and freezing sour cherries. Following primary processing, a number of secondary processes could produce juices, dried fruit, wines and concentrates from saskatoons, sour cherries and haskap. Currently in Saskatchewan, sour cherries are being processed into wine, juice, chocolates, and ice cream. These are sold in a number of locations across the province.

The Bruno Cherry Festival (www.canadianfruitgrowers.ca) will provide another important venue for people interested in sour cherries and fruit production in general. The event has become a Saskatchewan phenomenon in the last few years, with about 3,000 people expected to attend this year.

The Irrigation Development Branch is considering holding a workshop on trickle irrigation this winter. If you are interested, please phone 306-867-5500.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Lana Shaw, Provincial Irrigation Agrologist, SAF, at 306-867-5512.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food is constantly updating the wealth of information it makes available to Saskatchewan residents. You can download the most current version of any document posted on our website. You can also call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 to request a hard copy of many items. Below is a list of the latest documents posted, as well as the most frequently visited pages, on SAF's website at www.agr.gov.sk.ca.

BERTHA ARMYWORM MAP

This map displays the cumulative male moth counts collected in traps set up in various locations throughout Saskatchewan. A new map is created on a weekly basis and can be viewed here. Visit: Production | Insects

MANURE SPILLS

Manure is an organic and relatively inert material, so the environmental risk of a release is usually low. Regardless, it is prudent to take action to reduce potential impacts of manure spills. Visit: Environment | Regulation

EARTHEN MANURE STORAGES AND HOLDING PONDS

An as-constructed report provides details of construction (itemized in this document) to ensure that any deviation from the approved plan does not compromise the environmental integrity of the project. Visit: Environment | Regulation

REDUCING LEAFY SPURGE'S IMPACT BY USING SHEEP AND GOATS

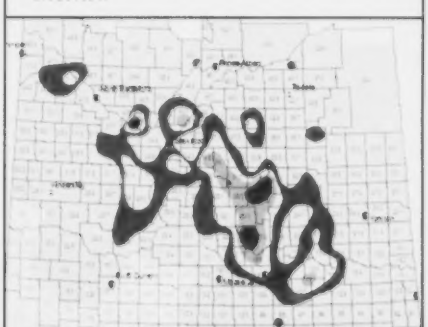
Sheep and goat grazing has been shown to be an effective method for controlling vegetation. Sheep and goats can provide an alternative to chemical control; they can be used where herbicides cannot be applied, such as near environmentally sensitive areas and in terrain where it is difficult to conduct chemical spraying. Visit: Production | Weeds

POTATO CULL PILE MANAGEMENT

Provides methods to dispose of potatoes safely so that they do not pose a threat of spreading diseases, especially late blight. Visit: Production | Storage

CHICKPEA IN SASKATCHEWAN

Kabuli chickpea is best adapted to the Brown Soil Zone, and desi chickpea is best adapted to the Brown and Dark Brown Soil Zones of Saskatchewan. Visit: Production | Overview



Bertha Armyworm Map

BREI Thoughts on the Business Retention and Expansion International Conference

By Don Perrault
Agri-Business Development Specialist,
SAF

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) Conference held in Regina from June 4 to 8, 2007. Many of the presentations and discussions reflected the opportunities and challenges evident in Saskatchewan today, including the following:

- As Saskatchewan enters the 21st century, the marketplace is becoming more globalized. While this can place pressure on our economy, it can also create opportunities, as advances in technology allow virtually any geographic area access to the global market.
- Small businesses, a big part of our provincial economy, have an advantage. With a trend towards shorter product cycles and the need for innovation, small businesses are flexible, adaptable and capable of responding to the pace of change.
- To sustain innovation, community leaders must seek common ground and engage the community to create a common purpose and vision for their future prosperity.
- Communities are encouraged to take a long-term view and invest in the appropriate infrastructure needed to attract new industry. There may, however, be some opposition as the costs incurred could impact local taxation.
- Communities are encouraged to build on their regional strengths. This could involve starting with several smaller projects and growing them gradually. This leads communities to successfully build a series of small, home-grown, locally-owned manufacturing, retail and service businesses as the foundation for community retention and growth.
- Communities that collaborate regionally will gain a competitive advantage in global markets, based on the innovation generated by the close association of local producers, suppliers and customers.

Communities that collaborate regionally will gain a competitive advantage in global markets.

The Agri-Business Development Branch of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) is working with agri-businesses across their regions to respond to agri-business needs and identify opportunities to enhance collaboration and build on regional advantages. SAF has a team of specialists in nine regional offices who can assist individuals and communities interested in working with agri-businesses to build on local opportunities within their region. To explore opportunities in your region, please contact one of our local Agri-Business Development Specialists.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Call Don Perrault, Agri-Business Development Specialist, Prince Albert at 306-953-2361; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 for information on the other regional offices; or
- Visit www.agr.gov.sk.ca and click on Regional Development Teams | Offices & Locations.

U OF S BIOVENTURE BUSINESS PLANNING CHALLENGE

By Ron Monette
Agri-Business Development Specialist,
SAF

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food and the University of Saskatchewan have partnered to create the first BioVenture Challenge, an initiative to help promote, develop, and accelerate the bio-economy within Saskatchewan. When the Strategic Research Program was established in 2003, they agreed to allocate a portion of the funding to encourage youth entrepreneurship. The BioVenture Challenge is a part of that entrepreneurial initiative.

The bio-economy holds much promise for Saskatchewan, particularly when it comes to creating new businesses and good jobs for our young people through strong, profitable, Saskatchewan-based companies. In addition to keeping bright young minds in Saskatchewan, this partnership will provide an opportunity to our recent graduates to pursue their dream of creating their own company. Research conducted at the U of S agricultural and bioresources departments will be commercialized for use in growing Saskatchewan's bio-economy.

Five finalists for the BioVenture Challenge were chosen. Business ideas include aquaponics, hardy fruit species propagation, in-situ bio-remediation process for environmental cleanup, hormone concentrates from natural plant sources, and a curbside collection process for gathering and processing compostable material. Each finalist will be provided with training assistance on how to develop their business plan for the stage II competition.

When completed, each plan will be reviewed by a panel of judges. Each judge has extensive experience in the business development process and a strong understanding of the bio-economy. The winning applicant will receive a cash award of $50,000 from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, which will be put towards the launch or operation of their company. In addition, all business plans will be submitted to the Saskatchewan Angel Investment Network to be considered for separate venture capital funding.

Hopefully, this competition will become an annual event. The BioVenture Challenge aims to be a catalyst in assisting some of Saskatchewan's best idea generators and budding entrepreneurs to move forward in creating viable business entities in the exciting bio-economy sector.

The judging for this year's competition will take place September 5, 2007. Results will be made public shortly thereafter.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Ronald Monette, SAF, at 306-933-6128.

Saskatchewan InDemand, Naturally!

By Shannon Chant
Crop Development Specialist, SAF

What do alpacas, flax, sheep, llamas, and goats have in common? They all produce fibre in Saskatchewan!

On September 15 and 16, Prairieland Park in Saskatoon will host the first ever Saskatchewan indemand event, which aims to highlight homegrown Saskatchewan product. As part of this conference, Fibre indemand, Naturally! will showcase fibre and fibre products from a number of different Saskatchewan sources, including alpaca, flax, goats, llama and sheep.

The Fibre indemand, Naturally! section will include an area of more than 26 booths dedicated to the range of fibres that are produced and processed in Saskatchewan.

Included in this area is a large space devoted to demonstrations of hand spinning and wreath making using flax fibre, and preparing and dying llama fibre. A number of individual booths also have demonstrations, including flax fibre extraction from straw and processing and using fibre for construction, home uses and the automobile industry. A number of samples will be available for a "hands-on" experience.

In addition to trade booths and displays, interactive demonstrations will be held throughout the weekend, including a showcase of spinning and weaving, as well as a fibre fashion show. A fibre competition for Saskatchewan residents will be held as part of the event and will include a People's Choice Award, so come out and vote for your favourite fibre. Several Saskatchewan retailers will also be on hand to showcase and sell the wide range of fibre products that are already available to us in our own backyard. A Saskatchewan Fibre Directory will be available for anyone interested in learning more about the participants in the event, Saskatchewan fibre, and courses and workshops about fibre.

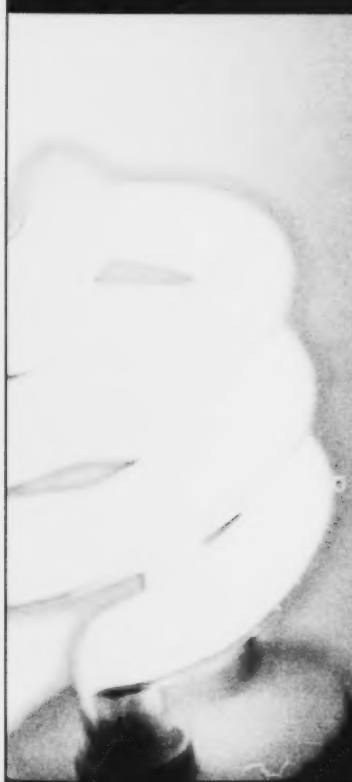
Come out to Fibre indemand and learn about the amazing range of fibres, processing and products we have here in Saskatchewan!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit http://join.saskrebwebsite.net/fibreindemand ; or
- Contact Shannon Chant, SAF, Swift Current, at 306-778-8291.

The Fibre indemand, Naturally! conference September 15 -16 will showcase fibre and fibre products from a number of different Saskatchewan sources, including alpaca, flax, goats, llama and sheep.

AGRI-SOURCEFUL!



The **Agriculture Knowledge Centre** has the latest answers on topics ranging from crops and livestock to nutrient management and the economic implications of management decisions. A toll free line puts you in touch with specialists who draw expertise from around the province and beyond. We can help you find the solutions you need for you operation.

We also have nine **Regional Offices**. Each office provides access to expertise from specialists in the areas of agribusiness development, livestock, crops and forage. They can help build on opportunities for agriculturally based economic development in your region, and assist with the business development processes, technology and partnerships with the people and agencies you need to know to expand, change or start your business.

CALL US AT 1-866-457-2377 OR VISIT WWW.AGR.GOV.SK.CA

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Fuel price impact on custom rates

By Joe Novak
Provincial Specialist,
Crop Economics
SAF

Do higher diesel prices mean contractors should charge more for custom work?

Absolutely. Contractors need to continually adjust their rates to cover costs.

For those who use the popular publication from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) entitled Farm Machinery Custom and Rental Rate Guide, the figures contained in that guide are still accurate. Diesel prices have not changed enough to warrant any changes to the publication or the rates posted within it.

SAF regularly receives questions about the effect of increasing diesel prices and how much more the custom operator should charge for custom work. The price of diesel has been moving up and down in a reasonably narrow band, and even though diesel prices are up, they have not climbed as much as many people think.

The bulk fuel price quoted as of August 1, 2007, was $0.74/litre. This is with the fuel rebate removed ($0.15/l) and the GST removed, since these are refundable to producers.

In the Farm Machinery Custom and Rental Rate Guide 2006/2007, the diesel fuel price used in the calculations was $0.71/litre, which is actually close to the August 2007 price. As such, the figures do not need to be adjusted, but if there is a price spike, then consider some adjustments. For example, if your combine burns 35 litres per hour, the increase to your costs is $1.05 per hour, and if you can combine 18 acres per hour, the increased fuel amounts to an almost negligible additional six cents per acre.

For those producers who are using the 2007 Crop Planning Guides as a tool to make projections for planting winter wheat, you might want to look at some small adjustment of the figures. The price in the Guides was $0.65/litre. The 2007 Crop Planning Guides were published in November-December of 2006.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

WILL CATTLE BUYERS BE WATCHING FOR YOUR CALVES THIS FALL?

By Bob Klemmer, P. Ag
Beef-Forage Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

There are few management skills or activities that can have as significant an impact on your bottom line as the effort and decisions you will make in marketing your calves. In this day and age, knowledge is power – your knowledge of what sells best in specific markets, your knowledge of the unique characteristics of your cattle, and the knowledge you provide to the people who can influence the price you receive for your calves.

If your cattle don't match the type of cattle selling best at your local markets, look around some more. The more buyers present for an auction that are looking for your type of cattle, the more competitive bidding you should see. You aren't limited to selling at your local market on the regular sale day. There are video sales, Internet sales, and all sorts of special sales (pre-sorted, satellite, etc.) available in Saskatchewan. As well, if you have done your homework and know what your cattle should sell for, you may be able to get bids directly from your local cattle feeders, which will reduce marketing stress and commission costs.

Take stock of the qualities and characteristics that should make your animals unique and more desirable to buyers in your market. What is your strength: the sheer numbers you have available, the colour, the uniformity, superior genetics, or your management program (e.g. preconditioned, age verified, "natural," on-farm food safety, Verified Beef Production)?

Remember, buyers will be more prepared to bid competitively for a group of cattle if they know something about them. Be prepared to tell the story about your cattle to the people selling and the people who will be bidding for them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Forage declaration deadline is September 30

By Trilby Henderson
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

With harvest underway for many forage producers, Crop Insurance reminds customers they have until September 30 to submit a Forage Declaration, reporting their 2007 production information.

As with all Crop Insurance yield-loss programs, your insured forage crop annual production is used to calculate claims and update your individual coverage. If you do not provide this information, your annual yield will be set equal to the production guarantee, which will reduce your future coverage. Customers who have second-cut production must also remember to contact Crop Insurance with this information. The corporation will be verifying a percentage of declarations, so it is important your declaration is accurate.

Each Crop Insurance customer received a yield declaration form via mail in July to report annual crop production (additional forms are available at www.saskcropinsurance.com | Forms).

Forage Declarations may be submitted by mail, fax or phone. Customers may also complete their production information online via CropConnect. To enrol in this free service, call 1-800-422-1943, and be ready to offer your current contract number and a valid e-mail address to a service representative.

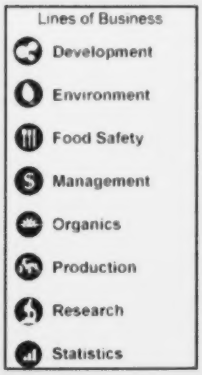
If you think you may be in a claim position, you must contact Crop Insurance as soon as possible, so that an adjuster can assess your crop. The deadline to report a yield-loss claim is September 30. Your complete Forage Declaration must be submitted before you can register a claim.

WORRIED ABOUT WILDLIFE DAMAGE?
If you notice wildlife damage to your crops, please contact Crop Insurance immediately. You may be eligible for payment under the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. An adjuster must inspect the damage before you harvest the crop.

The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program is available to all producers. Although the program is administered by Crop Insurance, you do not have to be a Crop Insurance customer to register a claim. To learn more about this program, please contact your local customer service office, or visit the Crop Insurance website - click on Our Programs | Core Coverage | Claims | Wildlife.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
- Contact Crop Insurance toll-free at 1-888-935-0000. Staff are available to answer any questions you may have; or
- Visit www.saskcropinsurance.com.

WEBSITE FEATURE: MANAGEMENT SECTION



On the left hand side of every page of the SAF website, at www.agr.gov.sk.ca, you will find eight light-green link buttons under the heading Lines of Business. These links are the "gateways" to the different sections of our website. This month, we are going to look at what you can find under Management on our website.

The Management section of the SAF website is divided into five categories:

- Programs
- Business Arrangements
- Financial Planning
- Skills and Training
- Marketing

PROGRAMS
Under this link, you will find information on programs such as the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) Program, SAF Pastures Program, Feed and Forage Listing Service, Livestock Loan Guarantee Program, as well as links to Saskatchewan Crop Insurance.

BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS
The Business Arrangements section contains examples of different types of lease agreements, lease rate surveys and FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) related to leasing and contracting arrangements that producers encounter.

FINANCIAL PLANNING
This category includes documents on costs of production in various areas, investment planning guides and links to programs specifically targeted to financial planning. You will also find the Crop Planning Guides here. The Crop Planning Guides provide information that can help estimate the income and cost of production for different crops on summerfallow and stubble in the various soil zones in the province.

SKILLS AND TRAINING
Under this heading, you will find documents related to farm employment, employment regulations and listings for human resource contacts. There is information and links to training programs such as the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) Program and the Green Certificate Farm Training Program.

MARKETING
The marketing category contains information about marketing cattle, feed, seed or vegetables. There is a list of special crop marketing companies, which includes their contact information along with the types of crops they handle. Information on the Canadian Wheat Board can be found in this category, along with an informational document on "How to Understand the Basis."

FOR MORE INFORMATION
- Email webmaster@agr.gov.sk.ca.

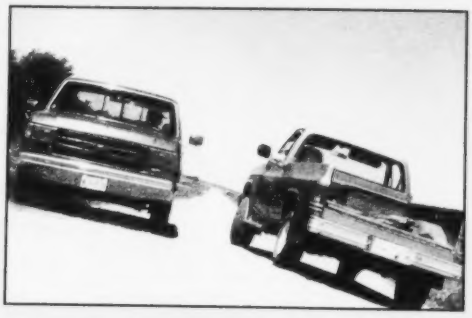
SAF's Farm Stress Unit

15 YEARS OF SERVICE TO SASKATCHEWAN'S FARM AND RURAL FAMILIES

OUR MANDATE
To provide confidential peer telephone counselling, support, information and referral services responding to the needs of rural people, families and communities.

OUR PRINCIPLES
Our Principles arise from our mandate. The Farm Stress Unit takes a holistic approach and believes that, given the applicable information, resources and support:

- people are empowered;
- people are able to address and resolve their own issues and problems;
- people become resilient; and
- people are better able to make choices and changes.



OUR SERVICES
- Toll Free Farm Stress Line, 1-800-667-4442
- Information and referral services, phone toll free, 1-866-680-0096:
  - CONNECTIONS Services Directory;
  - Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Inquiry Line;
  - "Pathfinding" Service;
  - Livestock Care Service (when personal problems can put livestock at risk);
- Other activities:
  - Workshops and presentations;
  - Biennial conference;
  - Farming and Ranching in Difficult Times kit;
  - The Farm Stress Line also provides services to Palliser Health Region in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Phone toll free 1-866-898-0280.

OUR COUNSELLORS
Farm Stress Line Counsellors are farmers, both grain and livestock, who are trained to handle a wide range of farm issues related to the human dimensions of agricultural production.

Counsellors' training includes:

- farm debt resolution procedures and processes;
- communication and counselling skills, including suicide intervention, interpersonal abuse and violence, and conflict resolution; and
- stress, and stress management, including how to improve sleep.

HOURS OF SERVICE
- 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Saturday, including holidays.

CALL BEFORE THE PROBLEM BECOMES A CRISIS

Make Your Farm a CleanFARM

Return your obsolete pesticides for FREE

October 23-25, 2007

Saskatchewan farmers can dispose of unwanted obsolete pesticides in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

It won't cost you a thing!

The Saskatchewan Obsolete Pesticide Collection Campaign is a one-time province-wide blitz occurring from October 23-25, 2007.

Farmers can clean out and safely dispose of obsolete, unwanted or unusable agricultural pesticide products. Saskatchewan producers can return obsolete agricultural pesticides – but not adjuvants, paints, solvents, domestic pesticides or other household hazardous wastes – to any designated ag-retail collection location during the collection period for safe disposal at an approved waste management facility.

For more information, contact: Sask. Agriculture and Food, Agriculture Knowledge Center
1-866-457-2377, or visit
www.agr.gov.sk.ca/pesticidecollection

Collection Locations

Assiniboia – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Biggar – Agricore United
Central Butte – Hawk's Chemicals
Davidson – Agricore United
Estevan – JRI
Foam Lake – JRI
Humboldt – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Indian Head – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Kelvington – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Kindersley – GMAC's Ag Team
Kyle – Pioneer Co-op
Langenburg – Sharpe's Soil Services
Leask – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Lloydminster – Agricore United
Maple Creek – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Mankota – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Meadow Lake – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Melfort – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Melville – Agricore United
Moose Jaw – Cargill
Naicam – Naicam Co-op
Nipawin – Pineland Co-op
Norquay – Agricore United
North Battleford – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Ogema – Dean Clarke Agri Services
Outlook – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Plenty – GMAC's Ag Team
Porcupine Plain – Agricore United
Prince Albert – Prince Albert Co-op
Radisson – MidSask Ag Services
Raymore – Cargill
Redvers – Advantage Co-op
Regina – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Rosetown – Rosetown Co-op
Rosthern – Agricore United
Saskatoon – JRI
Shaunavon – Shaunavon Co-op
Spiritwood – MidSask Ag Services
Strasbourg – JRI
Swift Current – Pioneer Co-op
Unity – Cargill
Watrous – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Weyburn – Weyburn Inland Terminal
Whitewood – Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Wynyard – Wynard Co-op
Yorkton – Cargill

Saskatchewan CleanFARMS
OBSOLETE PESTICIDE COLLECTION CAMPAIGN

Funding for the campaign is provided by: CropLife Canada, and Saskatchewan Council for Community Development Inc (SCCD)*
*Funding for SCCD is made available through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Saskatchewan (ACAAFS) program provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Supported by: CropLife Canada, Saskatchewan Environment, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Government of Canada, Saskatchewan Council for Community Development

Thomson Meats Hires New CEO

Thomson Meats, home of the Saskatchewan Toll Processing Centre, has appointed Paul Kowdrysh as the new CEO to help advance its operations and build the province's meat processing industry.

"Paul has experience nationally and internationally as a turnaround specialist assisting organizations in developing profitable ventures," said Catherine Folkersen, the Food Industry Unit Manager with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. "He has a terrific resume in the area of turning around companies in both Asia and North America, so we're feeling extremely fortunate to attract this level of expertise to Saskatchewan."

As the new CEO of Thomson Meats, part of Kowdrysh's responsibilities will be to increase the client base for the Toll Processing Centre and expand the province's value-added meat processing sector at the same time.

"Getting into the food processing industry can be very expensive," Folkersen noted. "Our goal has been to make that process easier and more feasible for people who want to take a raw commodity — grown or raised here in Saskatchewan — and turn it into a value-added product they can then market on the world stage. The Centre is the first step in that effort."

Paul Kowdrysh, Thomson Meats' new CEO, has experience nationally and internationally as a turnaround specialist.

The Saskatchewan Toll Processing Centre is a federally registered processing plant. It was established at Thomson Meats as part of the Government of Saskatchewan's $3.3 million Meat Processing Strategy, announced in 2005.

Entrepreneurs who have an idea for a value-added meat product can have it processed into a final state without having to construct a separate facility. Consequently, this will allow entrepreneurs to focus their efforts on further developing markets for new consumer products.

Clients enter into a contract with the centre to have their products processed on a custom processing fee basis. Clients can provide the raw product to the centre if it comes from a federally registered facility, or the centre can simply procure it on their behalf. The client then arranges for the final product to be picked up when processing is complete.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Thomson Meats in Melfort at 306-752-2802; or
- Contact Catherine Folkersen, Manager, Food Industry Unit, SAF at 1-306-933-5768, or e-mail cfolkersen@agr.gov.sk.ca.

SHOULD YOU CONSIDER RETAINED OWNERSHIP FOR YOUR CALVES?

By Grant Zalinko
Beef Consultant, Feedlots
SAF

Low feed grain prices and a low Canadian dollar relative to the United States' dollar through much of the previous decade supported strong prices for most classes of feeder cattle. In response, cattle producers marketed the majority of their calf crop during the fall calf run. The increase in feed grain prices during the final quarter of 2006 increased cost of gain for cattle feeders and resulted in declining feeder cattle prices. As the price spread between feeder and finished cattle has narrowed, producers need to carefully assess their cattle marketing strategy for 2007.

When comparing the price of barley FOB Lethbridge, Alberta for corresponding weeks in July 2006 to July 2007, the price has increased $80 per tonne ($1.74 per bushel) and resulted in increased cost of finishing a yearling steer by approximately $100. Consequently, cattle feeders are purchasing heavier feeder cattle to reduce the number of days cattle are on feed in the feedlot. Lighter calves will continue to be purchased, but the cost of a feeder calf will reflect the increase in cost of gain resulting from higher feed grain prices. Therefore, 2007 may be a good year to consider retaining ownership of lighter feeder cattle, while marketing heavier calves to meet fall cash flow requirements.

Several factors need to be considered regarding the decision to retain ownership of calves. Financial partners, including your lender and accountant, should be consulted to determine cash flow requirements and taxation implications of delayed cattle marketings into the subsequent year. On-farm feed resources, facilities and labour are important factors that should be assessed if producers are considering feeding their own calves. Alternatively, producers can choose to utilize the services of custom feedlot operators. Saskatchewan's cattle feeding industry includes several custom feedlots. Producers should contact the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association for a current listing.

SAF's regional network of Livestock Development Specialists can help beef cattle producers to evaluate cattle marketing and feeding strategies. Producers are encouraged to contact their local specialist early this fall for planning assistance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit and click on Regional Development Teams/Offices & Locations to contact your local Livestock Development Specialist; or
- Contact Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association at 306-382-2333; or
- E-mail ; or
- Visit

EVENTS CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL / WEBPAGE
Sept. 14-16	Saskatchewan indemand 2007	Saskatoon Prairieland Park	1-888-931-9333	www.saskatoonex.com/indemand/indemand_index.html
Sept. 14-16	Fibre indemand, Naturally!	Saskatoon Prairieland Park	306-933-7986	http://biolin.sasktelwebsite.net/fiberindemand/
Sept. 15	Deadline to seed fall rye and winter wheat and be eligible for winterkill insurance	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Sept. 15-18	Economic Developers Association of Canada National Conference	Delta Bessborough, Saskatoon	905-689-8771	www.edac.ca/html/shtml/edac_about.shtml
Sept. 18-21	Crop Life Annual Conference	Radisson Hotel, Saskatoon		www.croplife.ca
Sept. 30	Deadline to file Forage Declarations Deadline to register forage yield-loss claims or request an extension of insurance	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Oct. 1	Deadline to harvest potatoes (all varieties)	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Nov. 16	Saskatchewan Organic Research Workshop	Saskatoon	1-866-457-2377	

AGRIVIEW HARVEST PHOTO CONTEST

Do you have some great photos of swathing, combining, or other scenes from gathering the fruits of agricultural labour that you would like to share with the world?

Agriview is calling on all shutterbugs to send in their prized harvest photos. The photos should be fairly current (within the last five years), and depict a Saskatchewan harvest theme.

Our Harvest Photo Contest is accepting submissions via e-mail and Canada Post until October 5, 2007.

CONTEST SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

- The photos may be submitted as slides, colour or black and white prints (minimum 4 x 6, maximum 8 x 10 inches), or digital documents (RGB, 300 dpi, maximum final print size 8 x 10 inches). See further details on the SAF website at www.agr.gov.sk.ca, under Agriview Photo Contest.
- A maximum of five photos per person can be entered.
- If submitting images by e-mail, submit one image per e-mail (if five images are submitted, then five separate e-mails must be sent) to agriview@agr.gov.sk.ca.
- Type "Agriview Photo Contest" in the "Subject" line; clearly indicate your name, address, telephone number, and the title of the image in the message.
- Files must not exceed 3MB.
- If submitting by regular mail, send all entries (accompanied by a self-addressed return envelope with sufficient postage to cover all return fees, if you want your image(s) returned) to:

AGRIVIEW PHOTO CONTEST
#101-3085 ALBERT STREET
REGINA, SK, S4S 0B1

Besides being in focus and having the right exposure, a good photo follows the "ABC" rule:

- "Action": a good photo has people or things involved in some interesting activity;
- "Background": a good photo avoids having distracting backgrounds, like a telephone pole sticking out behind a person's head;
- "Close": a good photo will frame or crop the key action or subject closely.

Why hide those gorgeous photos on your hard drive, or in a shoebox in your closet when you can share them with Agriview readers?

The first prize winner will receive a gift basket of Saskatchewan–made items valued at $150. Second prize is a framed limited edition print by a Saskatchewan artist; third prize is a Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food fleece jacket, cap and travel mug. All winning entries will be featured in November's Agriview, including the first prize photo on the cover. Agriview is distributed to 50,000 farm and rural households and farm and food organizations across the province.

All entries become the property of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

Saskatchewan!